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Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I have an idea if the Government intend to appoint a special officer ? "

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" That may be necessary as soon as orders are received from the Secretary of State. We shall probably appoint a special officer and the acquisition of lands will then take place. There will be no difficulty to get more money."

Legislative.

Members of the Legislative Council and contracts with the Government.

* 307 Q.—Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR : With reference to the answers to question No. 1295 and supplementary questions given on 3rd December 1924, will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state if the Government have taken any steps, such as addressing the Chief Engineer and the Members of the Legislative Council, to ascertain which of the Council Members have entered into any contracts with the Government and if so, the result of those steps ?

A.—No.

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know the reasons why the Government consistently refuse to liberate the members from this unmerited slur? Probably many of us do not hold any contracts and I should like to know why the Government will not liberate us from this unmerited slur."

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" In answer to a previous question, I said that if there was any material allegation that at least one member of the Council held a contract, there would be some foundation to start an enquiry. I cannot very well do it merely on the supposition that some may have entered into a contract. If any member informs me that at least one member holds a contract then of course, I will have no hesitation to order an enquiry."

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—" Do the Government recognize that there is objection to holding such contracts ? "

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" It is not a question of moral propriety or not. The question is one of fact. Apart from the question of propriety or impropriety which will depend upon the examination of each case, I cannot very well start an enquiry unless there is some foundation for doing so."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" Information is available to us that some members have entered into contracts with the Government; we do not want to give the information because it may not be correct and some of the members may be offended. The fact that the Government should consistently refuse to make an enquiry, makes it more suspicious."

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" I think I can borrow from the first sentence of the hon. Member in which he says that it will not be decent to give the names. The Government do not wish to inaugurate an enquiry which may be considered to be an insult by the Members of this House. But on the other hand, if hon. Members will take the responsibility for saying, even though they do not give out the names, that members of this House hold contracts, that is a different matter. But hon. Members have not taken that responsibility."

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Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" The hon. the Law Member may utilize the C.I.D. to find out the information."

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" The hon. Member would be the first to blame me."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" The Chief Engineer may very well be asked and he will be able to give the information."

Mr. P. N. MARTHANDAM PILLAI :—" May I ask the hon. Member from Coimbatore the basis for his information ? "

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" The hon. the Law Member has asked me to give the information confidentially and probably I may write to him confidentially."

Executive Council.

Appointment to the Executive Council.

* 308 *Q.*—Mr. S. SATYAMURTI : Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state the reasons why a European Member of the Indian Civil Service has been appointed to the Executive Council in violation of the principle laid down by the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Government of India Bill of 1919 ?

A.—The hon. Member is referred to the answer to question No. 183.

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" The usual answer by reference is given. So far as I recollect now, the answer was that such a principle does not apply to temporary appointments. I am not asking whether there are statutory obligations imposed but whether the Joint Parliamentary Committee have not enunciated certain principles, one of them being that two members should be Indians and two Europeans. I am asking the hon. the Finance Member whether the Government think that they can go behind this principle and not appoint two Indians. I really want to know what the position of the Government is in the matter."

The hon. Mr. R. A. GRAHAM :—" The question was why, contrary to the recommendations of the Joint Committee, the Government have appointed a third Member from among the Services while there are already two such Members. That was the former question. The answer was that the appointment in question is a temporary arrangement and the recommendation could not apply. It is obviously undesirable to make a temporary appointment which may be upset by the Secretary of State and may cause considerable heart-burning to the person concerned."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I ask how long this temporary appointment is likely to continue ? "

The hon. Mr. R. A. GRAHAM :—" I am unable to answer."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" Is it likely to continue till Sir Arthur Knapp retires and is it proposed to appoint an Indian afterwards so that he will be the junior Member of the Government ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" I have two more years to run."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" I thought he was going to retire."